

Lohman honored for forestry work

By Brian Mortensen
Spilyay Tymoo

Rich Lohman retired as Bureau of Indian Affairs Assistant Forest Manager at Warm Springs in 2002, but the impact of his work has resonated with his former co-workers.

They nominated him for the 2005 Earle Wilcox Memorial National Achievement Award for the Northwest region. He received the award at the 29th Annual National Indian Timber Symposium in Visalia, Calif., June 9.

Lohman helped guide negotiations between the BIA Forestry Department and the Confederated Tribes' Natural Resources Branch in the early 1990s.

"I think Rich was really a stabilizing force," said his former co-worker Budd Johnson, who nominated Lohman for the award. "Rich often acted as forest manager, and he really kept the program together."

One of the stipulations of the award was that it be kept secret from Lohman until the time it was given to him. "So we worked through his wife," explained Johnson.

Cheryl Lohman works in the Office of Historical Trust Accounting. "She said she was going to speak in Visalia, and she drug her husband along," said Johnson.

Rich Lohman said he feels honored by the award. "I was pleased that the folks took the trouble to nominate me," he

said. "There were a number of folks writing some things to make it happen, I guess. Either that, or they were really happy to see that I'd retired."

Lohman, 59, is a native of Iowa and a U.S. Army veteran. He worked at the BIA office in Everett, Wash., until 1992, when he transferred to Warm Springs. It was like walking into a firestorm of controversy.

Blowdown sale

"The blowdown sale happened in 1990, and there were rumblings of discontent about it for years."

In 1994 the tribes filed a lawsuit over the blowdown sale, claiming the tribes lost millions of dollars through BIA mismanagement. "Things got ugly then," Lohman said.

The BIA forest manager at the time was transferred, and Lohman was installed as acting forest manager. He mediated in sessions between the tribal Natural Resources Branch, tribal committees and the BIA.

"There was a lot of uncertainty among the staff, because there was talk that the tribe was going to take over management of the whole forestry program, like they did up at the Lummi Reservation in Washington," Lohman said. "The BIA employees could be on the street the next day without a job if that were to happen. So there was a little anxiety about it."

Instead the tribes and the BIA tried to pick up the pieces



Rich Lohman with award

and keep the program going. "I guess that's how it fell on me, as the next person," said Lohman.

Acting manager

Lohman worked with five forest managers in his 11 years at Warm Springs, and often served as acting forest manager in between the hiring of new managers. But even with his experience as acting manager, Lohman was never tempted to apply for the position permanently.

"At first I was upset with the way they treated the previous forest manager," he said. "And after that, I knew that there were qualified tribal members."

Doug Manion has been the BIA forest manager for Warm Springs for the past three years.

"He'll stick around. I think he'll do a good job," said Lohman. "He's worked out

there for 20 years. He was the best qualified of those who came through, in my opinion."

Manion attended the timber symposium in Visalia when Lohman was presented the award.

Started in Idaho

Before moving to Warm Springs, Lohman worked for the Puget Sound Agency of the BIA. The agency serves 12 small tribes, mostly without reservation land, based in Everett.

"No matter what you did or how you prioritized your activities, there was always one tribe or another that didn't think we were doing it right," he said. "And that's the downfall of working in a place like that. The office was in downtown Everett. It wasn't on a reservation."

Lohman graduated from the University of Idaho with a B.S. in Forestry in 1968. He went to Idaho for its forestry program but also because the out-of-state tuition at Idaho was less than the in-state tuition at Iowa State University.

He served as a helicopter pilot in the U.S. Army in a career that included a tour of duty in Vietnam.

He began working for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1978.

"When I got out of the Army, my first forestry job was at Fort Lewis," he said. "They've got 50,000 acres of nice forest land, and they have a nice forestry program. Of course, most

people don't know about it. They don't do any clear-cutting, and it generates several million dollars a year.

"I was out there for four years. I wasn't getting any promotions there, because the people who were there weren't moving, so you start looking around. The BIA was expanding its hiring at that time, so I applied."

Lohman has not stopped working in the three years since his retirement, as he is still in demand as a forestry consultant to tribes in the Northwest.

He has been involved in the Inter-tribal Timber Council (ITC), an advocacy group for tribes that have timber on their reservation land. The council has been successful in getting legislation passed to improve Indian forest programs. The ITC serves about 70 reservations, from Alaska to North Carolina.

Theron Johnson, a BIA check-scaler and a member of four ITC committees, describes Lohman as having a productive yet "low-key manner."

"Rich also was involved in what we call the 'PIDT team,' the Project Interdisciplinary Team," Johnson said.

"They're the ones that come up with the timber sales and other projects. He was the coordinator for that, and that's where I was most involved with him, because I was also part of that PIDT team. He always got the job done."

Court upholds dam spills

(AP)—A federal appeals court last week upheld a lower court order demanding that the government spill water through five Northwest hydroelectric dams to help young salmon migrating to the Pacific.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was forced to allow substantial flows to bypass energy-generating turbines following a June 20 order by U.S. District Judge James Redden of Portland. Redden ruled that the salmon were imperiled when swimming through those dams' turbines as they headed to the sea hundreds of miles away.

The Bush administration called the order an "untested experiment," and "micromanaging the Columbia river" while urging the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to reverse Redden's order.

A three-judge panel of the appeals court ruled unanimously that the judge "did not abuse" his discretion in ordering the increased water flows, which are to last through August.

The Bonneville Power Administration, which sells the electricity generated by the dams, estimated spilling the water rather than running it through turbines will cost \$67 million in lost revenue, which could be saddled on utility customers in Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and Washington.

At the request of salmon advocates, fishermen and Indian tribes, Redden ruled that "as currently operated, I find that the dams strongly contributed to the endangerment of the listed species and irreparable injury will result if changes are not made."

Environmentalists, who brought the case, said the government hasn't been meeting its obligations to protect the threatened salmon and eventually want to close four dams in southeastern Washington.

Fires: close to Wolfe Point neighborhood

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The Eugene crew arrived Tuesday.

Roads in the area were closed, because of the number of fire personnel and equipment and with the increasing dense smoke at the fire's peak at mid-afternoon.

The origin of each of the fires was under investigation, Lydy said, by Warm Springs Fire Department and a special arson task force.

A hotshot crew from Warm Springs battled the Monday fire before leaving at about 4 p.m. Monday to take on a fire near Wenatchee, Wash.

A helicopter, a retardant-dropping airplane and a reconnaissance airplane were used in fighting the McKinley Fire.

The Wolfe Point fire reached a point about 2,000 feet from the Wolfe Point neighborhood about seven miles from Warm Springs, no one was evacuated from the 22 residences on the hillside.

The fire started about 11:45 a.m., and was reported at 12:02 p.m. in an area off Webster Flat Road north of Wolf Point. Moderate winds picked up and helped the fire move south and uphill over the ridge that overlooks the Wolfe Point neighborhood, but between on-ground and aerial efforts, the fire was thwarted from threatening homes.

Crews from Warm Springs Fire and Safety and Fire Management fought the fire and dug fire lines and posted structure-protecting engines on the cul-de-sac.

An airplane from the U.S. Forest Service in Redmond dropped fire retardant just uphill from the houses.

After battling the fire in the hot and breezy conditions, southeast winds pushed the fire east toward the Deschutes River by late afternoon, when Fire and Safety Chief Dan Martinez pronounced the fire 45 percent contained by 5 p.m. that afternoon. At that point, he said he was planning to send some of his firefighters home. The fire had been contained the following day.

As winds picked up in the afternoon, Martinez said he was mostly concerned about the co-

incidence fire reaching a bowl adjacent to the Wolfe Point houses and a usual shift in winds toward the southwest.

"At 2:30 (p.m.), we were concerned about it dipping into the valley," he said. "The fire creates its own wind. I thought this thing would turn south."

With the help of the dropped fire retardant and the wind staying on course, the fire stayed atop the ridge. Backfires were used to control the blaze, as fire crews allowed the head of the fire to head toward the river.

Wolfe Point residents watched as fire crews kept vigil over the neighborhood, some spraying their rooftops with water while

others offered cold water and ice to the fire crews and the fire command post at the intersection of Wolf Point and Webster Flat roads.

Only local traffic was allowed on either Webster Flat or Wolf Point roads while the firefighting efforts resumed.

While smoldering hotspots remained in the burned area of the fire, Martinez said it's important for area residents to leave them alone and not try to douse or ground them by themselves.

"It's not what the fire does. It's what the fire brings out," he said, meaning rocks become loose in the fire, and snakes,

burned out of their habitats, move to non-burned areas.

Lydy said that with the dry grass and summer conditions, Warm Springs Reservation residents need to be extra careful.

"The grass is really drying out," he said. "It's a very high fire danger. A lot of burn permits will be eliminated because of that."

Additionally, four camp crews, including about 40 people, from Warm Springs have been dispatched to fight fires around the state. Two crews are in the Gold Beach area and one each are near LaGrande and Vale.



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